



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Sept. 28, 2006

Contact: Jamal Ware
(202) 225-4121

Hoekstra Votes to Modernize Electronic Surveillance Laws

Bill Modernizes FISA, Ensures Civil Liberties Protections

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S Rep. Pete Hoekstra, R-Mich., Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, today voted for legislation to modernize the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, strengthen congressional oversight and protect civil liberties.

“FISA is a 1970s-era, Cold War law designed to catch Soviet spies, not address the 21st century terrorist threat,” Hoekstra said. “The bill passed by the House makes FISA technology-neutral and strengthens the ability of our intelligence and law enforcement professionals to stay a step ahead of the terrorists and spies who want to harm America.”

H.R. 5825, the Electronic Surveillance Modernization Act, updates FISA for the modern, networked communications age and establishes clear rules for normal, foreign electronic surveillance and surveillance in the cases of imminent threat and after an attack. It also removes excessive red tape and streamlines the process of applying for FISA warrants.

The Act also strengthens congressional oversight and ensures civil liberties protections by requiring increased notifications to the congressional intelligence committees and FISA court, and amending the National Security Act of 1947 to allow congressional leadership to determine which Members are briefed on special intelligence programs.

“We are fighting a war where intelligence is more important than ever before and provides the crucial first line of our defense,” Hoekstra said. As Members of Congress, we are responsible for ensuring that our nation has the legal means and ability to understand and stop terrorists before they strike, while protecting civil liberties. Congress has struck the balance with this bill.”

The House approved H.R. 5825 by a bipartisan vote of 232 to 191. It now goes to the Senate for consideration.

<http://intelligence.house.gov>